

Capital Plan Memo 4



May 8, 2018

To: Burlington School District Community
From: Superintendent Obeng
Subject: An Update on the District's Capital Plan

Hello, BSD community. In the past week, we have continued presenting plans, answering questions and gathering feedback from community members. We also presented plans for the South End Preschool Center and its parking lot (with access only from Shelburne Road) to the Conservation Board on Monday, May 7th. A permit has been submitted for the interior renovations ONLY at Edmunds and we are scheduled for DAB review on May 8th. The District has not applied for a permit for any other projects at this time.

We also spent the last week continuing to digest and respond to community feedback around these plans. We've read every question and comment that has come in through our online feedback portal and via email. As a result, we have scheduled more community input sessions and asked additional staff to attend these meetings to give community members more resources. In reading through questions and updating our Frequently Asked Questions document, one of the questions that grabbed our attention is related to utilizing the second floor of the new early education building in the South End for administrative offices. Or more simply put: **why do we need new administrative offices and can we afford them in these tight times?**

In the past year, we gave up administrative space to install a new motor room and additional instructional spaces and yet our current administrative offices remain in the way of our preschool program. The first option we looked at was leasing space for administrators to occupy during the 10 Year Capital Plan. Leasing office space and parking space in Burlington is prohibitively expensive. The idea to renovate a second floor of the South End Early Education Center came when we took an even deeper look at the cost and feasibility of 10 Year Capital Plan. Once we began mapping out how and when we would do work at each school, we realized we didn't have enough space to temporarily relocate students who will be displaced by renovations. In past years, we used privately owned buildings (like Saint Joseph's school) when we needed swing space for projects, but these spaces are now dedicated to other purposes and are not available to us as swing space. We realized that if we completely converted Ira Allen into preschool space, that would mean having to both lease or buy modular classrooms for students affected by other projects, AND lease space for staff indefinitely. This plan would have cost between \$7.7 Million and \$10.2 million. On the other hand, the total cost of the new South End Center, including fitting up the second floor for offices, is about \$7.5 million. So not only is the second floor option cheaper after 10 years, but the result is that we own the building our staff is in, as compared to having to continue to rent indefinitely. And again, by having staff out of Ira Allen, once this Capital Plan is complete, we will then be able to make a strategic decisions about Ira Allen and whether or not to use it for alternative programming, or sell it.

I hope that this note has helped to address some questions, concerns, and accusations around the office space, but we are happy to go deeper. I would like to invite anyone interested to join us to tour our current central office and early education spaces at Ira Allen. Please [follow this link to reserve a spot](#) to join us at Central Offices on May 10 or May 14 at 10 AM or Noon for a brief look.

As always, please visit <http://www.bsdt.org/district/budget/capital-planning/> to find the most up-to-date information regarding the Capital Plan, including presentations, slideshows, our continually updated FAQ document, and an online question/feedback form.

Sincerely,

Superintendent Obeng

P.S. May 7-12 is Teacher Appreciation Week. Please join us in saying "thank you" to all the teachers who work so hard to help our children succeed.

—————**YAW OBENG - SUPERINTENDENT**—————